

Tom Horne  
Superintendent

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## ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
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**HORNE ANNOUNCES INVESTIGATION CONFIRMING MEXICO RESIDENTS  
ATTEND ARIZONA SCHOOLS. TAKING  
ACTION TO PREVENT THIS IN THE FUTURE**

PHOENIX (Wednesday, May 25, 2005). State School Superintendent, Tom Horne, today announced that his investigation has confirmed allegations that Mexico residents are attending Arizona schools. He is taking action to prevent this from happening in the future.

Horne stated: "We need to distinguish among residency, legality of residency, and citizenship. Under federal law, we must educate students, whether their parents reside in Arizona legally or not. But if the parents actually reside in Mexico, Arizona taxpayer funds should not be used, and the students should either pay tuition or attend school in Mexico, where they reside."

Horne added: "Our investigation has confirmed that residents of Mexico are attending Arizona schools. We now have a videotape of students crossing the border to a bus stop where a school bus takes them to school in the United States. In addition, we have confirmed that trailer park spaces that the students gave as residences are empty. Furthermore, an employee of the trailer park admitted that the trailer park gives receipts for utilities that have been accepted by the Pima County School Superintendent's office as proof of residency.

"I have asked the Pima County Superintendent's office, which confirmed residence in the past, to undertake more thorough investigation, including home visits, to be sure that residencies given are truthful. I believe this to be justified by the factual confirmation that an actual fraud is occurring. The Pima County Superintendent's office has declined to do so. Consequently, I have asked the Ajo School District to undertake these investigations, since it is the district that requests state funds on a per-pupil basis. The superintendent of the Ajo district is consulting with the County Attorney, before responding to this request. If the response is negative, I will take further action, including but not limited to challenging requests for per-pupil funding for pupils who are not residents of Arizona. My duties as a state official, entrusted with properly disbursing taxpayer funds require me to do no less."

"If credible allegations are made about other districts, similar investigations will be made of those districts."

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